

**AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT**

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 79, line 2, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- ~~Disclosed is a~~ A carrier core material containing at least one metal oxide ( $M^L O$ ) having a melting point of not higher than  $1000^{\circ}C$  and at least one metal oxide ( $M^H O$ ) having a melting point of not lower than  $1800^{\circ}C$ , wherein the metal ( $M^H$ ) for constituting the metal oxide ( $M^H O$ ) has an electrical resistivity of not less than  $10^{-5} \Omega \cdot cm$ . Also disclosed is a two-component developing agent comprising a coated carrier, which comprises the carrier core material coated with a resin, and toner particles. Further disclosed is an image forming method comprising developing an electrostatic latent image formed on a photosensitive member with the two-component developing agent using an alternating electric field. The carrier core material and the coated carrier have high magnetization and are free from occurrence of leakage of electric charge over a wide range of electric field from low electric field to high electric field. According to the two-component developing agent ~~of the invention~~, an excellent image can be formed. --